

I must let you know I am extremely disappointed in the Governor's education budget. I have worked most of my career in New Britain and most years (out of 20) we have worked in a deficit. Our students have the best we can give but they get nowhere near other students do in our DRG.

New Britain for some reason, is considered a suburb in the Sheff/ONeil case. Hartford has been able to build brand new schools, have the opportunity to have CREC schools within their boundaries that their children can attend. Many of the magnet schools have given Hartford students opportunities.

Unfortunately, some of those schools are not Hartford's and the Hartford Board has to pay tuition.

New Britain also has many students at magnet and CREC schools. We pay a lot of money for tuition, pupil services, bussing and our families really want to stay in their community. They feel compelled to go elsewhere because of the large class sizes we have, their children do not have the same brand new schools with new books, technology, longer days with more enrichment activities but they want the best so they send them out.

We in New Britain also want that for our students. If we are flat funded this year (the city cannot afford more and we are flat funded from ECS funds) we will be at a \$5.3 million deficit. Charter schools and magnet schools get a 68% increase. Really? We have the most improved school in the Commissioner's Network, DiLoreto. We have 5 turnaround schools that are showing increases in attendance, student academic performance and behavior, yet without more support, we will not be able to maintain because we will have to cut teachers, social workers, administrators. This is not fair to the 10,500 students who look to us everyday for a brighter future, having the opportunity to read by the end of 2nd grade, to learn about their community and dream about going to college and making a difference in our community.

Please reconsider the way monies are used to support education in Connecticut. New Britain is a very poor community and is working hard at pulling ourselves out of a brutal loss of manufacturing businesses, community businesses and still have pride in our multicultural community. The poverty level is 80% - our children are your children. They live in Connecticut and you can make the difference in all of our lives.

Thank you for your attention to this very important issue.

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